



Staff Report

DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION REGARDING SAVE THE MUSIC COMMUNITY FESTIVAL

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Summary

The Parks and Recreation Department and the Belmont Chamber of Commerce have been in the process of evaluating the Belmont Festival in the Park for the past eight months. At the February 7, 2007 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, staff recommended that the Parks and Recreation Department no longer participate as co-sponsor to the Belmont Festival. The Chamber of Commerce and the Parks and Recreation Department agreed that the Festival has several flaws and have identified the following obstacles:

- Attendance has been on the decline for the past five years.
- Revenues have been on the decline.
- The Parks and Recreation Department dedicated approximately 400 hours of staff time to the 2006 event totaling over \$20,000.
- Attracting volunteers to work the event has been difficult to secure.
- The events purpose has been diluted, the uniqueness of the event has been lost.
- The Department does not have the resources to dedicate to an event of this size.
- Art and Wine Festivals as such have become overdone replicas of one another offering many of the same arts, crafts and activities. Almost every city has one.
- Community feedback has suggested that Belmont would prefer smaller one-day events that are community driven.

The Parks and Recreation Commission's recommendation did not preclude the Chamber from moving forward with the Belmont Festival on their own or with a new co-sponsor. In fact, the Belmont Chamber of Commerce's commitment to keeping Belmont in the spotlight and creating a signature community event has been the focus of their evaluation process since the February meeting.

The Belmont Chamber of Commerce is proposing to join efforts with School Force and combine the successful Save the Music event with the Belmont Festival. Save the Music is a "Home Grown" schools-based event that promotes the importance of providing music in our public schools. The proposal presented by the Chamber of Commerce and School Force is consistent with staff's finding that the community would prefer smaller one-day events that are community

driven.

The proposed date of the event is Sunday, October 14, 2007 from 11 AM - 5 PM. The event organizers are requesting that the City allow the event to take place on 6th Avenue and the City Hall Twin Pines Park complex, similar to the Belmont Festival site plan for the past years.

Background

The City of Belmont and the Belmont Chamber of Commerce merged together to produce the Belmont Festival three years ago. The intent was to take the best components from the City's annual event and merge it with the best components of the Chamber's annual event.

For a variety of reasons the event never found its footing and due to several factors including weather, conflicts with other events in neighboring cities and the lack of a consistent theme, the festival never reached its potential. Both the City and the Chamber dedicated substantial resources to give the event every opportunity to succeed, but as stated earlier that outcome was never reached.

School-Force is the education foundation for the public school district of Belmont and Redwood Shores communities. School-Force is an independent, non-profit, volunteer-run organization committed to maintaining and improving quality education in the six public schools in the Belmont Redwood Shores School District. As concerned citizens, committed parents, and advocates for educational excellence, School Force raises funds, gather resources, and act as catalysts to involve the community in public education.

School Force approached the Belmont Chamber of Commerce to combine their efforts and co-produce the Save the Music Community Event. Positive discussions between both organizations with support from City staff have led us to the proposal before you tonight.

Discussion

City staff has met with the Save the Music Community Festival organizers and has reviewed their operational plan and site plan. Staff is in support of the proposed event, and if directed by City Council, will continue to work with the event organizers to assist them in their event planning process.

General Plan/Vision Statement

The appropriateness of the Save the Music Community Festival should be evaluated in light of the following 2003 Vision Statement objectives:

Vision Statement – Distinctive Community Character

“Belmont prides itself on being unique.”

“We connect with each other in all kinds of gathering places.”

“Our strong sense of community and enjoyment of the town's assets and activities deepen as we become better informed and connected.”

Fiscal Impact

The event organizers are requesting that the City waive fees. The following City fees are associated with the proposed event:

• Police Services Fee	\$3,444.00
• Facility Rental Charges	\$1,600.00
• Posting and Closing Street	\$1,134.00
• Security Deposit	\$1,000.00
• Parks Maintenance Staff	\$350.00
• Temporary Use Permit Fee	\$210.00
• Facility Attendant Fee	\$150.00

Total fees requested to be waived: \$7,888.00

Public Contact

This matter was placed on the agenda and posted as required by the California Government Code.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the use of 6th Avenue and the City Hall Twin Pines Park complex for the purpose of hosting the Save the Music Community Festival, and furthermore, in the spirit of supporting our local schools and business community, waive the City fees associated with the event.

Alternatives

1. Approve the use of 6th Avenue and the City Hall Twin Pines Park complex but do not waive City fees.
2. Provide staff with alternative direction.

Attachments

- A. Save the Music Community Festival Proposed Site Plan
- B. Save the Music Community Festival Power Point Presentation

Respectfully submitted,

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